

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, and receipt of a certified copy of the priority document Japanese Patent Application 2002-233557, submitted July 31, 2001.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering the references cited with the Information Disclosure Statements filed August 30, 2002, and November 21, 2002. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner initial the Information Disclosure Statement filed August 30, 2002. Furthermore, Applicant requests that the Examiner indicate whether the Formal Drawings filed July 31, 2001 are accepted.

Status of the Application

Claims 1-18 have been examined are stand rejected.

Indefiniteness Rejection

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Claims 1-18 are amended to address the § 112, 2nd paragraph rejection by the examiner. The informalities noted by the Examiner have been corrected. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections- 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 1-18 are rejected of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abe et al(US 6,246,991; hereinafter "Abe") in view of Arbuckle (US 5,651,117; hereinafter "Arbuckle"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because even if it were possible to combine the references as the Examiner has alleged, the references Abe and Arbuckle, or any combination

thereof, fail to teach or suggest “a public office terminal, based on manipulation of an operator at the death notice accepting section of the public office.”

Claim 1

Claim 1 discloses a last will and testament service method comprising a last will and testament service terminal, a testator terminal, a communication line and a public office terminal. The Examiner takes the position that Abe discloses most of the features of claim 1, but fails to teach or suggest a public office terminal or that upon the death of the testator, information about the deceased is being sent from a public office terminal which accepts the death notice, records it and transmits, via a communication line, the information to the last will and testament service terminal. (Office action, pg. 5). The Examiner applies Arbuckle to make up this deficiency.

However, the portions of Arbuckle cited by the Examiner fail to teach or suggest a public office terminal as recited in claim 1. For example, the Examiner seems to target the central depository 100 of Figure 1, alleging that the central depository 100 is equivalent to the claimed public office terminal. Arbuckle discloses that this central depository 100 monitors all reports of death arising in a predetermined domain, and then screens them and selectively transmits them individually to customers who have contracted with the depository to be notified of certain deaths. (col. 2, lines 55-61). While this central depository 100 may receive reports of death from public agencies (i.e. government agencies 308, fig. 3), and thus may contain “public” information, it does not entail a public office terminal which based on manipulation of an operator at the death notice accepting section of the public office and which receives reports of death, as recited.

Under the Examiner's alleged reading of Arbuckle, any computer terminal containing public information could be classified as a "public office terminal." Applicant respectfully disagrees. Thus, because Arbuckle fails to teach or suggest any public access, public control or any other public involvement outside of potentially containing public information, the reference does not teach or suggest a public office terminal as recited in claim 1.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is patentable over the applied references Abe and Arbuckle. Further, Applicant respectfully submits that rejected dependent claim 2 is allowable, *at least* by virtue of its dependency.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Independent Claims 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 18

These claims contain the same recitation of "a public office terminal," as recited in claim 1 and thus are patentable for the reasons cited above. Additionally, claims 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, and 16 are allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency on independent claims 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15 respectively.

Conclusion

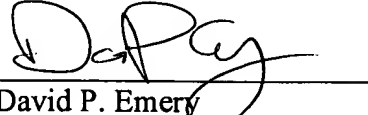
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-20 are allowable. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the application now is in condition for allowance with all of the claims 1-20.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 Q65630
U.S. Application No. 10/917,872

Please charge any fees which may be required to maintain the pendency of this application, except for the Issue Fee, to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880.

Respectfully submitted,


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